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Letter dated 12 January 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement welcoming the successful conclusion of the Twelfth Summit meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, issued by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Richard **Ryan**
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 12 January 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement welcoming the successful conclusion of the Twelfth Summit meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, issued on 6 January 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the successful SAARC Summit and today's important development in relations between India and Pakistan.

The European Union Presidency welcomes today's successful conclusion of the Twelfth Summit meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which was held in Islamabad from 4 to 6 January 2004. The approval of an Agreement on a South Asian Free Trade Area and of a Protocol on combating terrorism demonstrates the effectiveness of regional cooperation and dialogue and will be of great benefit to the region.

The Summit was attended by President Musharraf of Pakistan and Prime Minister Vajpayee of India and provided an opportunity for India and Pakistan to build upon recent positive developments in their bilateral relations. Today's important statement by both countries that they have agreed to commence a process of composite dialogue is particularly welcome. The European Union Presidency lauds the commitment of both leaders to the peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues and shares their view that constructive dialogue would promote progress towards their common objective of peace, security and economic development for their peoples and for future generations.